



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/823,113	04/13/2004	Bruce K. Zeller	34985.0136	4483
20322	7590	09/26/2005		
SNELL & WILMER ONE ARIZONA CENTER 400 EAST VAN BUREN PHOENIX, AZ 850040001			EXAMINER RODRIGUEZ, JOSEPH C	
			ART UNIT 3653	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 09/26/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/823,113	Applicant(s) ZELLER, BRUCE K.	
	Examiner Joseph C. Rodriguez	Art Unit 3653	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 9-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/13/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-21, drawn to a separating method and apparatus, classified in class 209, subclass 405.
- II. Claims 22-27, drawn to two frames, classified in class 209, subclass 408.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed as evidenced by claims 9 and 20. The subcombination has separate utility such as a standalone frame.

Inventions I and II are also related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). Here, the method as claimed can be practiced by another materially different device (i.e., a device including a removable screen).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Laura Zeman on September 20, 2005 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of group II, claims 22-27. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 9-21 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 25-27 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,863,182. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant claims are merely a broader version of the

patented claims. Further, Applicant has ample motivation to seek broader claims, thus it would be obvious to modify the claims in such a manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 22-25 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Johnston (US 5,482,165).

Regarding claims 22 and 25, Johnston (Fig. 1-5, best shown in fig. 2) teaches a frame for separating excavated material comprising a base having a front wall (19), two side walls (15, 17) and two horizontal side bars (horizontal reinforcing bars 49 seen between wheels 23 in fig. 2 and in phantom in fig. 1 near 21 and 27) extending backward from opposite sides of a bottom of said front wall;

at least one vertical bar member extending vertically upward from a top of each of said horizontal side bars (walls) at an end of said horizontal side bars opposite said front wall (vertical bars 49 near 21 in fig. 2);

and a grate (61, 63) extending from a top of said vertical bar members to a top of said front wall such that said grate forms less than a ninety degree angle relative to a ground surface (Fig. 2).

Regarding claims 23, Johnston further teaches at least one support bar (near 35 in fig. 2) extending from a top of each of said horizontal side bars to a mid-length of said grate on opposite sides of said grate.

Regarding claims 24, 27, at least one flange (55 or motor structure near 87) extending downward from a bottom of said grate. Further, Applicant is respectfully reminded that claim language consisting of functional language and/or intended use phrasing is given little, if any, patentable weight as the apparatus must merely be capable of functioning, or being used, as claimed. See MPEP 2112.02, 2114. Here, the structures cited above are certainly capable of facilitating engagement with a bucket of a loader/backhoe. Further, it is noted that the claim language "from a top" is interpreted as extending from an area near the top, thus a bar extending "from a top" is not regarded as required to be directly physically connected to the "top".

Claims 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kirksey (US 1,338,227).

Regarding claims 22 and 25, Kirksey (Fig. 1-6, best shown in fig. 1) teaches a frame for separating excavated material comprising a base having a front wall (side of 22 with gates 24), two side walls (side of 22 with support 10) and two horizontal side bars (1) extending backward from opposite sides of a bottom of said front wall; at least one vertical bar member extending vertically upward from a top of each of said horizontal side bars/walls at an end of said horizontal side bars opposite said front wall (vertical bars near 10);

and a grate (5 and/or 12, 13) extending from a top of said vertical bar members to a top of said front wall such that said grate forms less than a ninety degree angle relative to a ground surface (Fig. 1).

Regarding claims 23 and 26, Kirksey further teaches at least one support bar (middle vertical bar near 10) extending from a top of each of said horizontal side bars/walls to a mid-length of said grate on opposite sides of said grate.

Regarding claims 24, 27, at least one flange (13) extending downward from a bottom of said grate. Further, Applicant is respectfully reminded that claim language consisting of functional language and/or intended use phrasing is given little, if any, patentable weight as the apparatus must merely be capable of functioning, or being used, as claimed. See MPEP 2112.02, 2114. Here, the flanges cited above are certainly capable of facilitating engagement with a bucket of a loader/backhoe.

Conclusion

Any references not explicitly discussed above but made of record are considered relevant to the prosecution of the instant application.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Joseph C Rodriguez** whose telephone number is **571-272-6942** (M-F, 9 am – 6 pm, EST).

The **Official** fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

The examiner's **UNOFFICIAL Personal fax number** is **571-273-6942**.

Art Unit: 3653

Further, information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system.

Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PMR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PMR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see

<http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>

Should you have questions on access to the Private PMR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at **866-217-9197** (Toll Free).

Alternatively, inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding can also be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **571-272-6584**. Further, the supervisor's contact information is Donald Walsh, 571-272-6944.

Signed by Examiner Joseph Rodriguez

jcr

September 22, 2005

